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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

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2. There are eight oil storage bases in Astrakhan and each base is devoted to the storage of a particular type of petroleum product. There is no standardized numbering system of petroleum storage tanks in the USSR which would determine the contents of a tank assigned a certain number or destignation regardless of the tank location. The overall needs of the city of Astrakhan for petroleum products are supplied from storage base #8.

3. There are no military representatives at either Baku or Astrakhan. All petroleum shipments made to Astrakhan are delivered to officials of the Chief Directorate of Oil Sales (GlavNeftesbyt) and no deliveries are made to military officials at Baku. The only time that military representatives check the quality of the fuel is at the point of delivery to a military unit. When GlavNeftesbyt is transferring petroleum products to activities outside of their own chief directorate a rating certificate (passport) is prepared, but when the transfer is within the agencies of Neftesbyt no certificates are needed. All numbered plants in the Soviet Union are military which means that they are managed and financed by the military. Thus Plant 441 at Gurev is a military plant although I have no other information on it.

4. There are three main types of storage tanks in use for petroleum products. The most common is cylindrical in shape and rests on a foundation which is flush with the ground. This type of tank is covered with a conical shaped roof. The second type of tank is contrasted with this tank by its foundation

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which is built above the ground on pedestals. This pedestal-type tank is used for storing lubricating oils. The first type is used for storing nearly all types of petroleum. The third type contains products such as heating mazut and gudron and are merely open pits. Gudron is used as an additive and also as a fuel for stationary industrial installations. The volume of products in a given tank is measured by a calibrated stick which is mounted vertically in each tank. The level of products in the tank is determined by withdrawing the stick from the tank and observing the mark made on the stick.

5. Tanks on shore and aboard ship as well are all hermetically sealed. This simply means that the openings through which the tanks are filled and emptied are sealed so as to be airtight. The tightness of these seals is generally tested by means of a lighted match passed around the duct. Such tanks still have open air vents through which gases and vapours can escape harmlessly to the open air. These vents are usually in the form of pipes extending a safe distance above the tanks so that there will be considerably less chance of the fumes being ignited. When a tanker is hauling gasoline there is no cooking aboard ship and only dry rations are served to the crew. There is another purpose in sealing the tanks in addition to the obvious reason of preventing fire and that is to reduce the danger of the fumes poisoning the crew.

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